(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) There is a proposal under consideration to sign a new Indo-EEC Cooperation Agreement. This seeks to retain the positive elements of the existing Agreement, besides broadening the scope of cooperation to cover a wider range of subjects.

Strategy for Export Growth

3876. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Extreme Focus Group has suggested that the export products should carry the mark 'Made with pride in India' as strategy for export growth; and

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take to implement the suggestion ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have launched a major nation-wide campaign on quality awareness, in association with trade and industry to encourage our exproters to attain internationally accepted standards of quality.

Impact of Dunkel Proposals on Indian Pharmaceutical Industry

@3876-A. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the impact of Dunkel proposals on Indian Pharmaceutical Industry; and

(b) if so, what are the steps taken by Government to protect the industry ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) The Uruguay Round Negotiations are still in progress. It is generally recognised that a system for protection of intellectual property rights is needed as an incentive to encourage innovative effort. At the same time, it is necessary to strike a reasonable balance between the rights granted to them and their obligations, so that public interest needs are served. Government is seeking improvements in the Dunkel Text in the area of patents to meet public interest concerns.

Exploitation of Indian Women in Gulf Countries

@@3877. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly fifty thousand young women from Kerala and other parts of India have been working as domestic servants in the Gulf countries;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these women are being exploited and treated like bonded slaves; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) No precise information with regard to the number of house maids working as domestic servants in the Gulf countries is available. The number may be assumed to be about 50,000.

(b) and (c) The Indian Missions from time to time receive complaints of maltreatment from the maids working in the Gulf countries, though the number of complaints is not large. Whenever approached, the Missions render every possible assistance to the maids and contact the sponsors for redressal of the grievances. In many cases, the Missions provide shelter to the maids before they can find any other appointment. If destitute, the Missions also repatriate them to India at Government's expense.

The Goverament is conscious of the need to look after the welfare of the Indians wroking in the Gulf countries. Bilateral consultations are held with these countries from time to time and the welfare of the Indian workers is also discussed through such meetings.

@Previously unstarred Question 3665, transferred from 24th March, 1993.

@@Previously unstarred Question 3170, transferred from 19th March 1393,